

**REMARKS**

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted to remove multiple claim dependencies, to correct the priority information in the first paragraph of the specification, and to add a statement of government funding support. No prohibited new matter has been added by way of this amendment.

Except for issue fees payable under 37 CFR §1.18, the commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the pendency of this application including fees due under 37 CFR §1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-0310. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 CFR §1.136(a)(3).

If the Examiner has any further questions relating to this Reply or to the application in general, he[she] is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone so that allowance of the present application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

  
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Dated: February 4, 2004

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